



News from Congressman

Tom Lantos

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FOR INFORMATION CALL
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House Subcommittee Approves Lantos Legislation to Expand GGNRA

Washington, D.C. – A years-long project by Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA) to protect environmentally vulnerable open spaces amid urban areas on the San Francisco Peninsula advanced one important step along the legislative process today.

“I am delighted to announce that the House Parks Subcommittee has approved a bill to expand the Golden Gate National Recreation Area by nearly 5,000 acres to include these coastal areas,” Lantos said. “They are home to a wide array of plant life and animals, some of them threatened or endangered. By including these beautiful and accessible areas in the GGNRA, Congress will help safeguard them and ensure that they will not give way to development or urban sprawl.”

The Rancho Corral De Tierra GGNRA Boundary Adjustment Act of 2003 (H.R. 532), would adjust the park’s boundary to permit the inclusion of lands directly adjacent to it, as well as nearby lands by the ocean. Lantos introduced the legislation in February. He had won House passage of a similar measure last year, and the Senate passed a companion bill, but unrelated legislative developments prevented enactment of the bill.

“I am committed to prevail in this Congress so that this worthy legislation succeeds,” Lantos said today. “Adding these new lands to the GGNRA will protect rare plant and animal habitats and provide permanent recreational opportunities for the public to enjoy miles of scenic trails and panoramic views. The new additions to the GGNRA will be available to more than 6 million people who live within a one hour’s drive of the park, and will provide national park programs and experiences to millions of national and international visitors.”

The lands protected by H.R. 532 include Rancho Corral de Tierra, which is comprised of the four main peaks of Montara Mountain, the Martini Creek-Devil’s Slide Bypass right-of-way, and an area along the Devil’s Slide section of Coastal Highway 1 that bridges existing state and federal parkland.

The next step in the legislative process for H.R. 532 will be a review by the Committee on Resources, which is expected to meet before the end of October.

In the early 1980’s, Congressman Lantos fought for the inclusion in GGNRA of Sweeney Ridge, and succeeded in doing so in 1984. During the 1990’s, he authored and secured passage of legislation to expand the GGNRA to include dramatic seaside area of Mori Point and the Phleger Estate, which includes more than a thousand acres of pristine second-growth redwoods and evergreen forests adjacent to the Crystal Springs watershed in the mid-Peninsula.